

## BURIAL BOARD MINUTES MEETING OF JUNE 15, 2006

The annual meeting of the Burial Board was held via video conference June 15, 2006 from 1:00 to 3:00 PM.

Attending were: Carl Fourstar, Reuben Mathias, Sara Young, Sherri Deaver, Loren "Bum" Stiffarm, Ed Lavenger, Dr. Randall Skelton, Ryan Rusche, Mickey Nelson and Kathryn Rink. Non members in attendance were; Dal Smilie, Stan Wilmoth, Reno Charette and Ramsey Rink. George Reed, Sr. called after the meeting to let the board know he can best be reached at a different address and would have liked to have attended.

Chairman Fourstar welcomed the members and other attendees. He expressed his gratitude that appropriate appointees had volunteered to represent their tribe and the other positions. All attendees introduced themselves.

Chairman Fourstar was re-elected by the Board as its Chair. Loren "Bum" Stiffarm was elected as the Vice-Chair.

Chairman Fourstar asked each member to state what goals they had for the Board. Interest was expressed by some to support seeking the return of artifacts from museums so the cultural material could be preserved in its proper place. Bum Stiffarm supports loaning this material, when appropriate, to cultural centers and school districts within the state as a learning tool. Reuben Mathias supported the repatriation of artifacts but his presentation broke up due to bad weather and later he had to leave the meeting for those technical reasons.

Reno Charette represented the Governor's Office and expressed how interested the administration was in increasing the public's interest and awareness of the board.

Kathryn Rink expressed her support of the board and looks forward to training new board members like herself. She also will go back to her tribe and make good connections with members who are knowledgeable and authorized to conduct appropriate ceremonies.

Chairman Fourstar expressed his goal that all Montanans would understand that our ancestors are scattered far and wide and all need to be treated with equal respect. His hope is that we can carry on sending the closest tribal representative to a newly found burial site irrespective of the original tribal relationship.

Sara Young expressed her thanks for being named a new member and pledged to assist in any useful way. She also volunteered to help locate potential members from Northern Cheyenne.

Sherri Deaver wants to keep good communication between archeologists, the board and Tribal Nations.

Mickey Nelson will continue to be a liaison with Coroners who are involved in one way or another with every "find".

Dr. Randy Skelton is impressed with how many representatives attended and sees that as a good trend.

Ryan Rusche's legal work is largely with natural resources but the cross-over with board work is significant. He asked that we make sure board members with terms running later than this summer are filled in a timely manner.

Stan Wilmoth offered to continue the great support that the Historical Society and SHHPO have always provided.

Dal Smilie presented an overview of the 1/25/06 GAIN meeting and a GAIN senior staff meeting he attended June 12. This led to a discussion about possible legislation to assist the board in best carrying out its mission.

Suggestions were to define a quorum in statute that was set at the number that attended any meeting that had been properly noticed for at least three days. The board felt the current law with a majority of the board being a quorum was working and no legislation was needed.

The method of electing a chair or the term is not clearly set in law and could be clarified. Bum Stiffarm suggested that if legislation is proposed that a Vice Chair be added also.

The current legislation does not give the duty of insuring that funerary object inventories are actually conducted to any party. While this may be a good duty for some responsible entity to pursue a largely volunteer board may have difficulties carrying it out. Dal Smilie will work with GAIN staff to determine a possible solution.

GAIN staff felt that liabilities may be lessened if appropriate paid technical/scientific workers were available to go to burial sites with the cultural representative. Concerns were expressed by the Chair that these duties should not receive too much publicity and there should be no additional bias about creating an archeological dig out of a burial site. Dr Skelton felt that if any scientific techs were used that tribal members with those skills should be the preferred specialists. Dal and Stan discussed how a term contract might be used to have appropriate specialists on hand with short notice. This may not require legislation but possibly a rule or procedure change, it happens now as a matter of practice.

Several of the members suggested that the board at its next meeting receive training to help them with their duties. Stan Wilmoth and Mickey Nelson agreed to help with that training. Bum Stiffarm suggested some sort of training or educational materials be prepared for real estate developers. Mickey Nelson had recent experience with a developer and felt a hand-out setting out the board process might be useful.

The Board agreed to seek a meeting time for the late September time period. Dal will work with everyone's schedule to seek the best time. The meeting will be in Helena.

Ryan Rusche moved to adjourn.